THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF COMMERCE AND INDUSTRY (SHRI RAJIV PRATAP RUDY): (a) Government is supporting efforts to promote individual brands of Indian companies to foster international awareness of these brands in the overseas markets through financial assistance under the India Brand Equity Fund Trust.

(b) and (c) Government has been encouraging export of fruits through various schemes, such as arranging buyer-seller meets; participation in international fairs and exhibitions; setting up of integrated cargo handling and cold storage facilities at various International Airports, etc.

Exploration of new markets

2390. SHRI YADLAPATI VENKAT RAO: Will the Minister of COMMERCE AND INDUSTRY be pleased to state:

(a) the strategic perspective of the exports in view of the domestic surplus; and

(b) the action taken to explore new markets like Afghanistan and other Latin American countries?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF COMMERCE AND INDUSTRY (SHRI RAJIV PRATAP RUDY): (a) The strategic perspective of the exports as recommended by Medium Term Export Strategy, 2002-2007 *inter alia* include identification of 220 items in the import basket of the major trading partners as well as the export basket of India in order to enhance export growth to achieve India's share of merchandise exports to 1% of world's exports by 2006-2007.

(b) An integrated programme "Focus-LAC" has been launched by the Government in order to explore new markets and significantly enhance India's trade with Latin American countries. The main objective is to increase interaction between the two regions by identifying areas of bilateral trade and investments. Similarly, Focus: Africa programme has been launched.

There is potential for supplies of various materials from India required in Afghanistan for the re-construction activities in the

post-war scenario. The Medium Term Export Strategy has identified Afghanistan as a strategic trade partner for India.

WTO agreement on agriculture

2391. SHRI J. CHITHARANJAN:
SHRI V. V. RAGHAVAN:

Will the Minister of COMMERCE AND INDUSTRY be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government have put up proposals for inclusion of Natural Rubber, Coir and Jute as agricultural commodities under WTO Agreement on Agriculture; and

(b) if so, the details thereof and what efforts are being made to persuade WTO for an early decision in the matter with the help of other rubber producing countries?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF COMMERCE AND INDUSTRY (SHRI RAJIV PRATAP RUDY): (a) and (b) India in its initial negotiating proposals filed in January 2001 in World Trade Organisation (WTO) has proposed rationalization of product coverage of agreement on agriculture to include agricultural commodities such as rubber, jute and coir. The negotiations on WTO agreement on agriculture are still going on and the final outcome in this regard will known only after the conclusion of these negotiations.

Export of agricultural products

2392. SHRI C. RAMACHANDRAIAH: Will the Minister of COMMERCE AND INDUSTRY be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that export of agricultural products has increased in 2000-2001;

(b) if so, the details thereof; and

(c) the details of targets fixed for the current year and the likely achievements?